

SHOULD POLYGAMISTS BE ADMITTED TO THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH?

Part I.

PENDING a decision of this question by the next Presbyterian Council, please allow me to present some reasons for a negative answer. Much profuse talk is apt to grow out of mutual misunderstandings. Let us understand each other and give due weight to every real argument.

Difficulties cannot be ignored and they may be urged against every possible position. But the subject is not on that account incapable of a right, as well as of many wrong, solutions. Some would blindly ignore the difficulties and avoid the responsibilities by letting the whole question alone—baptizing all who apply, if not otherwise dabarded,—and bequeathing to the native church the herculean task of battling with a full grown evil. No mother or nurse would treat her infant so. Besides to so tolerate sin would be to become partners in it. It will be found also that the most of the difficulties do not lead against the main question, but only against related or subordinate questions. It is asked, 'If polygamy is forbidden what will become of the discarded wives? Which wife should be chosen, the one best loved? the Christian woman? the mother of the children? &c.' Does not the first of these questions seem a very much like that other question which the missionary often hears. "If I quit lying and stealing what shall I eat?" Secondary points should be discussed in their proper place, but let not be turned aside from the prime question. *Should men having sexual relations with two or more women, or women having sexual relations with two or more men, be admitted to the church by baptism?* Since no one affirms that women so situated should be baptized the question becomes. *Should men living with two or more wives or concubines be baptized?*

Let us consider, what saith the scriptures? What has been the practice of the Church and the opinion of Christian workers? What saith Korean custom? And finally a discussion of some of the difficulties and some suggestions toward the securing of uniformity.

I. WHAT SAITH THE SCRIPTURES?

In both covenants marriage to one wife is admittedly the ideal condition. The pattern given in Eden for all time was followed by the best type of moral excellence of Old Testament worthies—Adam, Seth, Noah, Isaac, Joseph, Moses,* Joshua, Samuel, Isaiah &c. lent the weighty influence of their example in holding up this high standard.

Those who favor the admission of polygamists admit these things but claim that their force is weakened by the easily proved fact that polygamists were not excluded from the Old Testament church. No one denies this, and more, it has nothing to do with the present discussion. Polygamy, concubinage, adultery and murder existed in Old Testament times and were tolerated in those who were not excluded from the church. Even good men were guilty of them all.

To understand God's permission of numerous sins mentioned in the Old Testament we must remember the dual nature of the Old Testament church. It was a spiritual within a temporal kingdom—the true church, invisible, within the Jewish system, visible. In the nation there many unregenerate people. Laws were made restraining such yet not so stiff as to entirely exclude them from national privileges. For the real church within the nation, high ideals were held up and enforced by eminent examples of rewards and punishments. The real spiritual kings of the Old Testament were almost as lofty in their ideals as the leaders in New Testament times. The Old Testament church and state were theocratic. Laws were given which were capable of the very highest spiritual construction and yet, as laws of the state, might be lowered in their interpretation to meet the conditions of a very imperfect community. Much truth was taught in figure and by example and was plain to those who had the spiritual ear to hear and heart to understand. The noblest among them present unsurpassed ideals of moral excellence, and by example teach their fellow men what they would have them all to be and what His ten commandments really mean. Violators of these highest ideals and even gross transgressors were often still allowed to remain in the church. But their presence there was no justification of their sin nor of tolerating similar sins in this entirely different dispensation.

* Footnote.—The reference in Numbers 12: 1, to the Ethiopian woman, whom Moses had married is far from proving that Moses practiced polygamy. His wife, Zipporah, not being a Jewess, would no doubt be an offence to his Jewish relatives. Or if it could be proved that this Ethiopian woman was Zipporah still it would be necessary to prove that Zipporah was still alive when numbering Moses with the polygamists.

ation. To affirm otherwise is to do away with church discipline for drunkenness (Noah), polygamy, murder, and adultery (David), polygamy, concubinage and idolatry (Solomon), lying, &c. The Old Testament being a true history, the heinous sins of many who remained until death members of the state church, are simply mentioned as historic facts. The careful reader will observe that God often saw fit to give them time to repent, and that he often held them up with their sin and its subsequent punishment to future generations in the light of history as warnings against sinful courses. Jacob's many unchangeable years, the extermination of Gideon's family, David's turbulent family, Solomon's apostasy to the gods worshipped by his wives are certainly no recommendation to the practice of polygamy or concubinage. Scripture does not represent these practices as commendable but as sins which sooner or later bring punishment on the offenders and work demoralization in their families and neighbors.

Nevertheless the Old Testament is not without its record of how polygamous relations and unlawful marriages were sometimes dissolved. In Gen. 16; 3—Hagar is called Abraham's wife. In Gen. 21: 10, Sarah said to Abraham, "Cast out the bondwoman and her son". In Gen. 21-12 he is commanded "In all that Sarah hath said unto thee, *hearken unto her voice*". The separation was certainly with God's approval. Abraham did not send her away until he had received the command of God to listen to Sarah. In Gal. 4: 30—Sarah's words are quoted as approved. Though Hagar had a son yet the separation was with God's approval—*nay, by His command*. The expression, he "took bread and a bottle of water and gave unto Hagar and sent her away," may denote that he did not send her away empty, but provided liberally for her need, as he could well afford to do. A thoroughly anomalous position is taken by some in this controversy. They hold that while contracting a second marriage is a sin yet the continuance in the polygamous relation is not a sin or is a sin which cannot be prevented, since (they say) it would be a greater sin to sever the relation than to continue it. Then though it is a sin to steal a thousand dollars it would be wrong to restore it; a sin to take an oath to commit murder, but a greater sin to violate the oath. Next is not Christian, but heathen philosophy, which teaches that sins are one of the necessary results of our environments.

Again it is claimed that it would be a doubly immoral act to put away a second wife if she were the mother of children. God did not seem to think so in Gen. 21: 12. It is also mentioned in Ezra 10th chapter that *very many* of the people had taken

strange wives of the people of the land. This was in violation of God's command to the Jews, and when the national conscience became aroused all these unlawful marriages were dissolved. To make the case still more clear and specific it is mentioned in Ezra 10: 44 that some of these wives had children. This whole-sole divorce was under the direction of Ezra, God's priest. Doubtless, like all other Scripture, it is not of any private interpretation, but was inspired for our learning. Here is Old Testament authority for the putting away of wives—with children—who occupied the position of wife contrary to Scripture enactment. *It was at a time of revival when the people's consciences were tender when they said "Let us make a covenant with our God,"* and they were acting "according to the counsel of those who tremble at the commandment of our God."

It is claimed by way of counterproof that there is no positive command in the Old Testament against polygamy. But even this we are scarcely ready to admit. It may be said with some truth that there is no positive specific command in the Old Testament forbidding Judas to sell Jesus. No command here, "Thou shalt not betray thy master." Why does everyone feel that the sin of Judas was an unspeakable crime? There is the instinctive feeling that this specific sin was the violation of some general law—either the sixth or the tenth Commandments. In exactly the same way one instinctively feels that polygamy and concubinage are wrong and begin to search for the law forbidding them. It is certainly indisputable that they are *either right or wrong*. They cannot be devoid of moral character. Might then let us all practice and advocate them. Are they idolatry? profanity? Sabbath desecration? dishonoring parents? murder? theft? lying? coveting? It may be covetousness if one like David covets another man's wife—but suppose Brigham Young the wives are already his. Then though covetousness somehow one feels it to be wrong. Few would advocate taking undivided Brigham into the Church. But why? What commandment has he violated? Polygamy is not a violation of the first, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, eighth, ninth, or tenth commandments. Then there are no other alternatives. Either (1) Brigham Young was right in saying that polygamy might lawfully be practiced, or (2) the ten commandments are an incomplete moral code, or (3) *polygamy is wrong, a violation of the seventh commandment*, and directly opposed to the Old and New Testament injunctions against adultery, fornication, uncleanness, &c. It can hardly be questioned which of the three is the right alternative. We believe that the seventh commandment is the chief Old Testament command against

polygamy, and that the numerous Old and New Testament prohibitions of fornication, adultery, &c all bear against polygamy. This view is confirmed by the very nature of marriage as shown in Gen. 2: 24. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." It is here shown to be a religious ordinance instituted by God between one man and one woman. The inferences are, (1) that *mutual tie is a stronger one than that binding to parents*—since he is to leave them and cleave (be joined) to his wife, (2) that neither of the parties can be united to any other person, since they two have become "one flesh." This cleave indicates a 'moral and social union'. 'One flesh' is a plea that they are bound together in an exclusive sexual relationship.

Old Testament teaching gradually freed the Jews from the practice of polygamy. The Mosaic law, by "its many enactments, tended to discourage, and finally to abolish polygamy. By degrees monogamy gained a strong foothold among the people, and marriage was regarded as a sacred Covenant made before God Prov. 2: 17; Mal. 2: 14; Hos. 2: 20). Hence marriage is often used by the prophets as a true emblem of the relation between Jehovah and Israel." *Schaff Herseoff Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*. One of the best of Jewish authorities, E. W. Edersheim, as quoted by Fr. J. J. Lucas of *India* says, "After the Exile it (polygamy) was a thing unknown among the Jews." *Law and Polity of the Jews*, page 101. Dr. Warfield of Princeton, quoted by Dr. J. J. Lucas, says, "Polygamy was not tolerated under Roman laws. It does not appear to have been common among the Jews of the time. It was a Greek custom."

W. M. BAIRD.

EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT.

REMINISCENCES OF JULY 23, 1894.

It is not the purpose of this article to write a history of this day, but rather to recall a few of the minor happenings.

The day dawned as many, since the arrival of the Japanese troops, had dawned. The farmer with rice, beans, barley and what was on his way to the early market. The slaves, servants and humble poor with basket in hand or laid across the shoulder were about to go out to make the purchases for the day. Unusual activity among the soldiers was observed. They were not only marching in and out the South gate as they had done for the past month or more, but were seen going toward the Royal Palace. For several days before this, alarming reports of Japanese ultimatum and that decisive measures were about to be taken were extensively circulated. What that ultimatum was or what steps of a decisive character Japan was about to take, the common people could only guess and that very vaguely. When the Japanese soldiers were seen marching towards the Palace, the Koreans surmised what was going to happen and the way-cry, a long drawn whoop, was raised in various parts of the city.

I did not hear this way-cry. But a few moments later there was a sharp knock at the front door. A Korean, half dead to death, announced: "The war has begun! The war has begun!" It was now a few minutes past five. A few moments later I was on the top of the Pai Chai school hill where a few Korean students had already gathered in answer to the war-cry. The West gate was crowded with Japanese soldiers looking across the school campus in the direction of the Palace. On the east wall back of the Ewa school there is quite an elevation. The sentries were posted. They frightened the school girls nearly to death as the little things did not know for whose special benefit and for what purpose these soldiers were gathered on

The women are the greatest trouble to the bicyclist; covered up with their veils they can see but little, and if let alone they could be easily passed, but just as one is about to get safely around one of them, some officious person in the rear calls out to her to get out of the way, this she promptly does by jumping right into the machine, for a Korean woman will never look to the side as she leaps.

When a thing like this occurs, the men of the locality usually come up and assure the wheelman that it was her mistake and she "meant no harm" by getting run over. Evidently they fear they may have trouble for stopping this foreign invention so suddenly. Their good nature, or whatever it is, ought not to be imposed upon by the fast riding of wheels through the crowded streets. There are good places enough where one may let out and get a good spin, without endangering the limbs of the women and children by scorching through the crowded streets.

At present, those like myself who ride the wheel here for simple pleasure are few. Some of our people use them in "country work" and have made long and successful trips by wheel in the interior.

H. N. ALLEN.

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II.

WHEN Jesus lived among men divorce and immorality were common enough, but it would be very difficult to prove even rare cases of polygamy among the Jews, Greeks or Romans. In the Roman world the only thing corresponding to polygamy was a loose form of concubinage, something like that existing at present in Japan. "An absence of three successive nights broke the bond." See *Schaff Herzog*.

To those who had the hearing ear, Christ again lays down new laws,—which are only the old, spiritualized. For the hardness of your hearts Moses suffered certain things, "But I say unto you." Even if nothing had ever been said on this subject before, Christ speaks as one who is clothed with the power to lay down new laws. His words have the ring of a new interpretation and are vital with new life. By means of them we may understand the real meaning of the Old Testament. His laws were for the government of a Spiritual Church, not merely for the regulating of a worldly state church, composed of both regenerate and the unregenerate. The Church will be pure in proportion as it obeys Him. What does He teach? Matt. 19: 4. He "made them male and female," not male and females. Matt. 19: 5. "They twain shall be one flesh"—Two, not three or more. In Mark 10: 11, He says, "He that putteth away his wife, and marieth another, committeth adultery against her." The sin is not only committed against God but against the wife. Bad as putting away would be, the sin evidently does not consist in putting away. That has another name—divorce. The Sin is called *adultery*, and consists in marrying another after divorce. This view is still further strengthened by the clause in Matt. 5: 32, "Causeth her to commit adultery." Certainly she did not sin by being forcibly "put away," but by "marrying another." These passages are still further incidental proof that there was no polygamy among the

admission from heathenism of converts who have more than one wife. The practice hitherto has been to insist upon all but one being cast off, without regard to the laws of the country and rights of the wives and children." This quotation showed the policy pursued by all the great Missionary Societies prior to 1858. The compiler continues, "As in such discussions the advocates of new and peculiar views are generally the most forward to speak, it might appear, if speeches were counted, as if the majority were in favor of the change. Altho we know that the large proportion of silent members were opposed to any change except, it may be, in certain cases to be judged on their own merits, we did not feel at liberty to leave out the remarks of any of the speakers," &c. "The reader is left to weigh both evidence and argument and arrive at his own conclusions." A close study of the discussion in the London Missionary Conference will show clearly that the majority of those who favored the admission of polygamists did not voice the opinions of the missions, but expressed merely their own personal views. The great missionary societies, or even the missions, which favor admission are very few indeed.

The Committee of the Church Missionary Society in 1857 printed and circulated for the information of their missionaries a minute against the admission of polygamists to the Church. After remarking, "It must be borne in mind there is no evidence that polygamy was regarded otherwise than as an offence to the Jews in our Lord's time, or that it was commonly practiced. It was also forbidden by the Roman law;" and giving excellent scriptural arguments to prove that polygamy is contrary to the will of God, they say, "The natural conscience of every man must bear witness, however faint, to this truth. The condemnation of the practice by the Roman law, and by other heathen nations, is a testimony to this fact. The original creation of one man and one woman, may be appealed to as enforcing the true nature of marriage. The saving alive in the ark of men with one wife each, which is a type of admission to the church of Christ, together with the providential equality of the sexes in every land, and at all times, may be pointed out as corroborative testimony to the continued force of the original institution. Various other moral considerations may be urged to show that the practice is unlawful, &c." ** "The foregoing may also help also to decide the question of the admission of polygamists to baptism. The sin may have been commended as ignorance, but its continuance, after Christian instruction, must bring guilt upon the conscience. The polygamy which is prohibited by the law of God is not only the taking but the having

and retaining more than one wife. Baptism upon every view of the ordinance carries with it a public profession of submission to the Law of Christ, which the polygamist habitually violates. In the case of those, especially, who are baptized according to the adult service of the Church of England, no man can honestly say that he will "obediently keep God's commandments, and walk in the same all the days of his life," when he purposes to live with two or more women, as wives, at the same time. See Appendix G in the *Report of the Conference 1862-63*.

One of our own number recently, by letters to leading missionaries in neighboring countries, collected some valuable information and arguments favoring both sides of this question. It should be noted that those who wrote favoring the admission of polygamists were largely from two countries only—China and India—covering but a limited portion of the Church both in time and space. In the case of certain missionaries to whom has been committed the wide-spread proclamation of the gospel rather than the organizing of the church, it must be acknowledged that their views would be of more worth were they discussing subjects relating specifically to evangelistic methods rather than to rules for organizing Presbyterian churches. In council it takes a consensus of many men of many minds to reach a wise decision. After hearing the letters from missionaries read and the declaration made that so many were in favor of excluding polygamists from such membership and that so many were in favor of admission, I must confess to having had a secret wish to make a very different classification of sentiments expressed. It would have been about thus. (1) Favoring exclusion, about so many, (2) favoring admission about so many, (3) doubtful, or those who didn't exactly know their own minds, but who perchance may have used an expression of sympathy for the poor second wives and their children and the hope that they be not harshly dealt with, about so many. Many of the letters of the third class did not contain an expression with which I cannot heartily concur, for who does not feel sorry for unfortunates, and who would not advise that they be well treated? The position of many of those favoring admission was much weakened by the confessedly adverse views of the majority of missions to which the writers belonged.

Now comes a reply to the memorial of the synod of India to our General Assembly asking leave to baptize "converts who have more than one wife, together with their entire families" Dr J. J. Lucas, protests against this action as a violation of the "basic law of the church," shows that this synod is the only

*This was also the view taken by the last General Assembly of the

mission in India taking such a stand. No other church in India, so far as I know, permits the baptism of polygamists. The two largest missions in North India forbid it. A committee of Bishops of the Church of England reported to the Lambeth Conference against the baptism of polygamous converts. In their report they say, that they cannot find that either the law of Christ, or the usage of the early church, would permit the baptism of any man living in the practice of polygamy, even though the polygamous alliances should have been contracted before his conversion." The Bishop of Lahore has decided that polygamists shall not be baptized. The North India Conference of the American Methodist Church takes the same ground, saying, not too strongly, that "if we allow polygamy to place among us, there is reason to fear that it will long remain a source of trouble and weakness to the infant church, which can ill afford to contend with such an element."

One of the very best of authorities on scriptural and ecclesiastical questions, Dr. Charles Hodge, says, "From all the scripture arguments from the nature of marriage it follows that as it would be utterly incongruous and impossible that Christ should have two bodies, two brides, two churches, so it is less incongruous and impossible that a man should have two wives. That is, the conjugal relation, as it is set forth in scripture, cannot possibly subsist, except between one man and one woman." "If such be the true doctrine of marriage, it follows, as just stated, that polygamy destroys its very nature. It is founded on a wrong view of the nature of woman; places her in a false and degrading position; dethrones and despoils her, and is productive of innumerable evils." In discussing the question whether Christ made a special exception in favor of those who contracted marriage with more than one woman in the times of their ignorance, he says, "It concerns a matter of fact. Those who assume that such an exception has been made, are bound to produce the clearest evidence of the fact. This is necessary not only to satisfy the consciences of the parties concerned, but also to justify a departure from a plain revealed law of God. It would be a very serious matter to set up in a heathen country a church not conformed in this matter to the usual law of Christendom. Missionaries are sent for

Northern Presbyterian Church. Without suggesting any change they are of the opinion that the admission of polygamists would require a revision of the *Confession of Faith*. "Marriage is to be between one man and one woman; neither is it lawful for any man to have more than one wife, nor for any woman to have more than one husband at the same time." See *Confession of Faith*, Chapter XXIV.

not only to teach Christian doctrine but Christian morals. And the churches which they found, profess to be witnesses for Christ as to what he would have men believe, and as to what he would have them to do. They ought not to be allowed to bear false testimony." For much valuable teaching on this subject see *Hodge's Systematic Theology*. Vol. 3, page 390-390.

The same author quoted in the *Records of the Missionary Conference, Shanghai—1890*—page 616, says, "That polygamy was not allowed in the apostolic church, is shown by the fact that it has never been tolerated in any subsequent age. All Christians (individuals excepted) have regarded polygamy as contrary to the will of Christ, and therefore it has never been tolerated in any Christian church. This fact alone has, with unequal weight, it would be deplorable if now, in the nineteenth century, evangelical churches should be established among the heathen, teaching that a man may be a Christian, i. e., obedient to the law of Christ, and yet be a polygamist, contrary to the teachings of the saints in all ages since the advent of Christ."

W. M. BAIRD.

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TO THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH?

III.

WHAT SAYS KOREAN CUSTOM?

EVERY country has its peculiar customs which should be followed when not contrary to the word of God. In some countries where wives are simply bought and sold, or changed, some arbitrary rules might be made, but in countries like Korea, with an ancient civilization, he would be a rash man who would run counter to all the best customs of the land. I say the best customs of the land, for a close study of Korean social conditions will show that there are many customs which are not good customs. To a superficial observer some of these bad customs might seem almost to have become the law, just as in some states elopement or divorce might appear to a stranger to be the rule rather than the violation of the best American customs. Korean law on the subject of marriage must be learned, not from statute books, but from what the best people among them regard as the best canons of social propriety. Marriage is largely a social affair regulated but slightly by the state. Marriage law is moral and social rather than legal and punitive. The violator, with his descendants, suffers the consequences in various ways; i. e. he loses the respect of the best of his neighbors; his children lose their standing, &c. It must be remembered that there are in the three repositories of power, the nation, the community, and the family, each supplementing the other in enforcing social and legal obligations, and such unwritten canons, the harder to find and to violate, are often just as effective as those found on the statute books.

The question of concubinage is not so complicated in Korea as in India and many other countries. There real polygamy is not regarded as right. Not so in Korea. The freely admitted lightest standards of morals denounce both polygamy and concubinage as wrong. In this discussion there has been much vague and misty talk and much confusion of terms. All women living in regular relations with a man and supported by him have been called

as his wives. The advocates of admitting polygamists into the Church take a step further in Korea than in most countries. They would not only admit polygamists but also those who live in similar relations with concubines. Even the best Korean customs would condemn such a thing. Some study of the relations between the sexes in Korea leads to the following classifications.

1. *The Real wife.* She is married to her husband with elaborate ceremonies, first the engagement (당혼), by the engagement agent (례장지), pledging troth; presents are sent, the wedding day is appointed and finally the marriage is consummated. After marriage, too, she is guarded from over-familiarity and coarseness by certain rules. No thought is entertained but that the marriage is made for life. The social standing of her family is the same as that of her husband and her children marry into families of equal social standing. She is the mistress of the household. Other women yield her this position, and the children of other women call her mother. She cannot be divorced, and even if deserted by her husband she is expected to remain true to him. After her husband's death, even the young, she is expected not to marry again. When led by poverty or otherwise to seek a second partner, the woman puts a blot upon the family escutcheon, and her first husband's children are thereby hindered from making as advantageous marriages as they otherwise could have done. The fact that a mother's grandmother, or great-grandmother has thus disgraced herself makes a young Korean's chances of a good marriage more doubtful. If the young she remains faithful to her husband she is called a 정절 and at her death a memorial tablet (결녀) will be erected. Marriage to this first wife is the great event in a young man's life, and after marriage she is registered with her husband in the national registration (호적).

No Korean ever doubts that this first wife is rightfully the real wife, or would admit that her legal place belonged to any other.

2. *Second wife.* If the first wife has no children, a second wife may be taken with some of the ceremonies of real marriage. She is usually of lower social standing than her husband. Her children call the first wife mother. They do not usually marry into the first families as if they had been children of the first wife. This marriage (랑첩) is more easily dissolved than the first, and after the man's death she is more apt to seek another partner than the first wife. Most so-called second wives are simply concubines (노) who are living with men without any sanction. The real second wife is very rare. Dr. Nevius, in *China and the Chinese*,

says, "Polygamy is not common, and is only considered allowable or rather respectable, under certain circumstances. The same occurs in the writings of the philosopher Mencius. There are three kinds of filial impiety, the greatest of which is to be without male descendants' *** Hence if a person has no children at the age of forty it is expected that he will take another wife. The wife retains her original position in the family." In speaking of the majority of so-called second wives, Rev. J. C. Gibson says, "I am quite aware that by Chinese law and custom there is only one wife, and that the others have no legal standing,—no right in even to the possession of their own children, &c." In the *Review of the Missionary Conference, Shanghai 1890*, page 614, Rev. V. Noyes, in treating of dual marriage, &c., says under, "Polygamy,"—"Concubinage is a more correct term to designate custom among the Chinese, often referred to as polygamy; for in taking a second partner, the prescribed formalities are not necessary; nothing is needed but a contract with her parents. The act is deemed discreditable, except in the case of the wife bearing no sons. 3. The sons which the second woman bears are legally her own, but belong to the wife. 4. The degradation of the wife to the second place, or the elevation of the second woman to the first place, are alike illegal and void." Since exactly the same conditions exist in Korea the indiscriminate practice of taking every concubine a wife should be avoided. In a community where polygamy is so rare it is evident that the case of a real polygamist's admission to the Church would be very rare indeed—"millionth heathen" in fact.

3. *Housekeepers.* Widowers who do not care to marry usually take housekeepers very soon after the death of the wife. Poor boys of the lower classes, who cannot afford the expense of a Korean marriage, "Keep house" with some woman without marriage. These women are usually young widows, and were not allowed by former Korean laws to marry again. Poverty, &c., induces them to take the place of housekeeper in the home of unmarried men. As a rule they are not protected by any legal promise, form or ceremony. The union depending on the will of the parties, or rather of the man, may be of only short duration or may last for life. Housekeepers are, as a rule, from a more respectable class than concubines, and Koreans accord them a more honorable position. Their misfortune is that Korean law will not formerly allow them to marry a second time; else the most of them would have sought legal unions. The sometimes inadvertently spoken of as wives, their real name is housekeeper (가주이). When a man is thus living with one woman, who is practically

his wife, there is no reason either in Christianity or in revised Korean laws why they should not be legally married, and, if believed, why they should not be baptized. Certainly some arrangement should be made to render legal and binding on Christians to make a compact, to tolerate to heathen society, but repugnant to the genius of Christianity.

4. *Concubines.* The great majority of so-called second wives are really concubines. There is every grade of immorality here. Some are the rude and brazen courtezans of the street. Some are attached more or less loosely to one or more men for longer or shorter periods. Some have retired temporarily from a professional immorality and are living, during mutual consent, as the mistress of some one man, while with some the relation is occasional for years or during life. Children are sometimes the object of such unions, but more often a wanton fancy, or convenience during a temporary absence from home. But while making all allowances for the various degrees of heinousness of this sin, yet we must not forget that it is a relation which is repugnant to all law, human or divine, Christian or heathen. Respectable people do not doom their daughters to such a relation, and respectable women do not seek it for themselves. Poverty may drive such persons to it in rare cases, but concubines, as a class, are low both in origin and habits. They are usually the daughters or the children of harlots. They are never married. Their children can only marry with the children of concubines or with inferior persons. She can be sent away at the will of her paramour, and on being sent away, as also in the event of her death, she will seek another illicit connection, which is morally neither better nor worse than the first. Her legal and legal status is absolutely *nil* in Korea. Tho she may have been a man's mistress for years and the mother of children, the law gives her partner the right to send her away at his option. Of course if she has children, and especially if she be a woman of strong will and character, she may be able to place various obstacles in the way of being sent away; but neither in Korea nor in America. If the fact that there are children by such connections should license the admission of persons so connected into the Church in Korea then the equal fact that dissolute people in other countries have illegitimate children should be a plea not only for allowing them to continue their dissolute lives, but for giving the sanction of religion to those habits in every country. The fact that there are children does complicate the case, but no more than the children of immoral unions in other lands. The children undoubtedly have a right to their

father's care, and the woman may have claims on his support but that is no reason why he should continue to live in relations with her. Even the heathen conscience pronounces these unions disgraceful. Can Christian requirements be lowered below heathen standards?

There is in Korea a large submerged class who know the standards set by Korean ethics, but make no attempt to follow them. They form promiscuous partnerships in every town, and sooner or later probably form one which lasts throughout life. Such relationships are formed without ceremony and are terminated in the same way.

From the above review it is evident that the first wife has an honorable position which cannot rightly be taken away from her and cannot be shared with another. She, too, recognizes a responsibility to be true to that position, and even tho deserted by her husband she will often suffer much and long rather than untrue to him. *Korean custom honors monogamy.* It tolerates concubinage, and polygamy also in the rare cases in which it occurs. So far as it goes it coincides with the voice of Scripture and of Church authority in forbidding the baptism of polygamists or of those living in concubinage. The voice of God speaking in their consciences is weak, but it says in a whisper, "I am God's Word and the church authority says clearly, 'He made them male and female'" and still more clearly, "He declared: unto his wife."

Since writing the above, the KOREAN REPOSITORY for July, 1906, brings an excellent article by a careful observer, Rev. H. Jones. Conclusions, reached by independent observation and expressed in treating another subject, are valuable and timely corroboration of the views expressed above. "Ordinarily a second marriage was simply mutual agreement to live together unmarked by any ceremony, tho sometimes bowing to each other was privately observed. The first was the only legal wife and in this the Koreans are strict monogamists. (italics mine) The first off spring may not be supplanted, and all others but the pure line of descent, bearing a slight taint in Korean estimation." "Concubinage is tolerated as an institution but no concubine is regarded in the light of a wife. As an institution, concubinage enjoys an evil odor in Korea. The women who enter upon this relation come from the lower or disreputable walks of life, and are regarded as dishonored by it. The off spring imposed upon them certain disabilities, such as exclusion from desirable official posts, and bear wherever they go a serious social stain." See page 228.

IV. DIFFICULTIES AND SUGGESTIONS.

The voice of Scripture and of Church authority agree, and Korean custom says very much the same thing. Nevertheless all kinds of immoral connections are found to exist in Korea. Separation would often cause hardship to all concerned. What is the church going to do about it? We have no objection. We must first obey the Master as His will is expressed in His revealed Word, and second, we must be faithful to the principles and standards of the Church which sent us out. We make no war with customs outside of the church, tho a firm stand for the right at first will ultimately reach far beyond the church membership. But in propagating the Church we are bound by its law and its polity. We are not clothed with authority to make changes on our own responsibility in order to meet the demands of a regenerate human nature.

Difficulties are admitted. Sin committed even ignorantly puts people into positions hard to escape from without suffering, and worse still, often involves the suffering of the innocent. But why does the presence of a difficulty or a hardship suggest an impossibility to a Christian? No promise was made him that his road would be a smooth one, free from rocks and thorns. But it is heathen not Christian philosophy which teaches a gospel of hopelessness. It is certainly a axiom which teaches that the commission of sin is never a necessity. There must be some way of escape from sin without further sinning, however rough the road may be. Christianity holds out the struggle, after he has obtained his own consent and cooperation, the vain hope of escape from the necessity of further sinning. The very word Christian, compels the mental image of one who has taken up his cross and is following a Suffering Master. It is for alleged Christians that Church rules are being made, and to whom Christ said, if thy hand or thy foot cause thee to offend, cut them off, if thine eye cause thee to offend, pluck it out. To the newly renewed Christian, the nature living in submission to the will of Christ, the thought of being compelled to live with two or three concubines would not only be repugnant, but he would recognize the difficulties of putting them away as only part of a fixed life principle—viz. taking up his cross and following Christ. See Mark 8: 34-38, and 9: 43-50 "There are many hard things to do in Christianity. A man is required to give up his life if need be in order to be a Christian. *** This is the law of Christ. A great deal that is sentimental may be said against that that is the law of Scripture. Then we are to remember another thing. When Christ calls us to do anything He al-

ways gives us grace to do it. To do right wrongs no man. If such is the law of Christ, the Church cannot give sanction to continuation in sin simply to avoid difficulties. It is sometimes objected that to send away concubines, &c., deprives them of the help of a Christian home. To which I reply that a *true Christian home* is impossible either for them or the other inmates unless they are sent away. A polygamist's home is an unclean place and certainly a place where it would be impossible to live according to the directions of I Pet. 3: 7. Prayers would undoubtedly be much hindered if not entirely prevented by such unchristian conditions. In this opinion many missionaries agree. "I never knew a single instance in which a polygamist who continued in that state made any progress in religion. I do not believe that I ever knew one of the many whom we have had in that state being really converted to God. People submitted cheerfully, when they wanted to be right with God, to abandon all their wives except one."—Rev. James Calvert, from the Tagalog Islands. "We cannot tamper with polygamy. I have never known an individual get on in the least in his religion who refused to abandon every wife, but one. I have found that the natives have a conscience, and they feel that it is wrong in the sight of Him who made them, &c."

"It is better to have a few firm Christians with clean moral principles, who will hold up the light of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, than to have a multitude who have sin mixed up with them."—If we want a Church that will shine out 'clear as the sun and as fair as the moon, and as terrible as an army with banners,' against every sin, that Church must be purged from sin, and polygamy is one of the worst and most demoralizing of sins."—Rev. J. A. Taylor. See London Conference Report.

It is sometimes said that this question will in time settle itself. But this is impossible. For years to come the Church will probably be surrounded by the same conditions as at present, corrupting its moral tone, destroying its sense of the sinfulness of polygamy, and furnishing polygamist candidates for baptism. One leak is sufficient to sink a ship. Polygamists will get in if an opening is left for it to enter. On what scriptural grounds could one be cast out of the Church for contracting a polygamist alliance after baptism, in the face of the fact that he had seen his polygamist neighbor received into fellowship? In both cases the sin is committed against light. But granting that to sin against the greater light is the more heinous crime, yet the condition and its difficulties are the same. Suppose that such a man is cast out of the Church for polygamy and afterwards repents; wherein is his case easier to deal with than that of the

polygamist candidate for baptism? His children, too, will need care, and his concubines will also need comfort, and should not be unkindly dealt with. Sentimental reasons could be found for receiving them all into the Church. The concubine would be retained at only the cost of a few months or years suspension from Church privileges. Why not? His neighbor was admitted to Church under an interpretation of I Tim. 3: 2, which allowed every man except Church officers to have several wives. Why should he also not take advantage of his privileges?

It is asked, by way of objection, how can a moral obligation, seriously entered into, be annulled because a man has become a Christian? *True. The very objection is that this is an immoral connection, compelling the continuance of a sinful relation. Therefore it is bound to be broken up. How long would such a man stand in a Christian country? The man who marries a second wife will be prosecuted for bigamy, and the preacher who knowingly performs the ceremony may rest in an adjoining cell. A promise to kill an enemy, to sacrifice to an idol, an oath to do wrong—however solemnly made—must in duty be broken. It is wrong to take such an oath, but not to break it. It is a violation of the eternal principles of right, and is morally null and void. Is a man morally bound to continue living with a concubine? Is concubinage in Asia more moral or more binding than bigamy in Europe and America? Children may constitute a claim to support, but there is no promise nor obligation founded on Scripture, Korean custom, or reason, for a man to continue in sin with a concubine. Christian courts hold that a wrong done to a woman puts a claim upon him, which it takes either by fine or imprisonment, but never by allowing him to continue the sinful relation if he has a wife living.*

It is not true, as has been objected, that the discarded mistress has been "sent out to a life of sin and shame." She has always lived a life of sin and shame, and the separation simply discontinues the sinful relation with the applicant for baptism. Plain talk is necessary in order to disillusionize this subject from the false light in which it had been placed. In both Christian and Korean eyes she is a concubine, living a disreputable life.

Since it is unquestionable that in the majority of cases there is but one wife, and in the few cases where there are two wives the first is preëminent in standing and rights, it does not rest with us to decide which wife shall be chosen. So far as women's rights in Korea the one first married has every legal and moral right to the position of wife. It would be a most unspeakable mistake therefore for a missionary to violate all these rights by giving the sanction of a religious ceremony to the man's union

either with a former or a newly selected concubine. I have read that in Africa, the moral enormity is occasionally condoned of allowing a man to dismiss all former wives and marry a new one on the plea that heathen marriages are not marriages at all. It would be impossible to find justification for this either in Scripture or in Korean custom. The claim of the first wife is further strengthened by the fact that in the majority of cases she will try to be faithful to her husband even though he is unfaithful to her.

It is sometimes mistakenly supposed that those who are opposed to the admission of polygamists also are opposed to treating the superfluous women and children humanely. There is no necessity that they be mistreated. They should be kindly dealt with and if possible won to Christ. Temporarily at least they should be supported with as comfortable support as that which they have been accustomed. All that need be demanded is the discontinuance of the sinful relation with the applicant for baptism.

It is evident that the chief difficulty with the question of what to do with the second wives. There has been a custom and the woman has not previously been a person of a low and habits as is the case with concubines. The difficulty is real one and cannot be regarded lightly. But in transition times difficulties are always more numerous and heavier to carry. One must constantly be remembered, too, that the Christian is called to a life of self sacrifice. No better application of Mark 10:29 where men are called upon to leave "wife or children"*** for my sake and the gospels," can be found than by teaching the duty of discontinuing a polygamous union.

Certainly there is no more Scripture against the taking of twenty wives than there is against the taking of two. If one is not forbidden by the seventh commandment or by Gen. 2:24 neither is the other. Who would teach that a man who has twenty wives should be admitted to the Church. Yet if the difficulties are to be considered rather than a question of numbers then it would certainly be twenty times as difficult to separate from twenty as to separate from one. More difficult and more obligatory, because the sin is multiplied. Difficulties are to be measured either of duty or exemption from duty.

The second wife should be supported in separation as long as she wishes to remain. If she depart, the man is not bound in such cases.

An applicant whose first wife is dead, or has been unfaithful and thus given cause for divorce, should be free to regard his second wife as his real wife. But if his first wife is living and

has been faithful to him he has no right to prefer another to her. The fact that she is old and ugly, infirm and cross cannot be recognized as a Scriptural ground for divorce.

If the conclusions reached in the previous discussion are correct, as I believe they are, I think we will find the following course of conduct to be most in accord with Scripture.

1 Polygamy and concubinage cannot be tolerated in the Christian Church.

2 Baptize believers who have only one wife.

3 Applicants who have no wives, but are living with other women as wives, should, previously to baptism, be required to get away all but one of these, and to this one they should be lawfully married.

4 Applicants with two real wives should not be baptized until the marital relation with the second ceases. The matter should be left with the consciences of both. Responsibility for right teaching rests with us. Responsibility for obedience is with the applicant.

5 Require immediate separation from all concubines in order to receive baptism. Deal with each case separately according to its merits, with much patience and love. If she is the mother of children, the father should support her in separation until she can get other support. But never call her a wife. Of her it may be said, she "whom thou now hast is not thy" wife.

6 The father is responsible for the support and careful training of his own children.

7 Believing wives of polygamists may be baptized. They are to have only "one husband." If their husbands are unbelievers the wives are not at liberty to do what they will.

8 Previous alliances, which have been severed for the scriptural cause of adultery, should not be held as any longer binding, and the testimony of the interested parties should not be taken into account.

9 Applicants who are not willing to agree to the above conditions should be required to remain in the catechumen class for further instruction, or until their consciences lead them to do their duty.

The above rules, or something like them, will be a necessity until the *Confession of Faith* is revised, or at least until the General Assembly puts a very different interpretation upon the words of Chapter XXIV.

The objections to the catechumenate are entirely removed when remembering that everything depends on the will of the applicant. By repenting and discontinuing the sinful relation he may be baptized at any time, if otherwise eligible. Polygamy

and concubinage are exceptions. Repent and be baptized a general rule. It is only asked that they bring forth fruits for repentance.

I sincerely believe that a firm and definite course, similar to that outlined above, is the only way by which the Church may be kept pure from one of the greatest dangers that threaten it. In confirmation of this view, I quote the opinion expressed in a memorial to the Archbishop of Canterbury from an African Conference, signed by four European and fourteen African gentlemen and by twenty-five laymen. "Polygamy forms the principal barrier in our way. We believe that to remove it, in the way that some suggest, would be to remove all the sincerity and wholeheartedness in embracing the Christian faith and thus lead to the admission of a very weak and heterogeneous body of converts; and we are certain that any compromise in this view hitherto maintained of the Christian marriage tie would be a great blow to Christian morality in these parts. We respectfully request our ecclesiastical leaders to give forth a definite utterance on this subject, as soon as may be, for we are of the opinion that for it to be treated as an open question is in itself a weakness to the Church and an additional difficulty to us in our very arduous efforts for Christian purity in this part of Africa." See *Report of London Missionary Conference, 1888*, page 106.

I am aware that this subject is complicated by differences of opinion on every hand. Altho differing from some of my colleagues in these conclusions I believe that we are all alike sincerely desirous of reaching a Scriptural, just and tenable position. With the earnest wish that this presentation of the subject may lead to reaching a decision consistent with the Word of God, and to our inherited beliefs,—a decision of which we need not be ashamed now, and which will not hereafter cause any vain regrets, I submit these papers to the consideration of the Korean Synod, the Synodical Council and other Christian workers.

WILLIAM M. BAIRD

PAI CHAI COLLEGE.*

SCHOOL work opened September 24th, 1895 with a corps of two foreign and two Korean teachers in the English Department and three Korean teachers in the Chinese and Korean Departments. The attendance from the first has been sixty-four responding to roll call the first morning. There has been a growing desire on the part of Korean boys to avail themselves of an education in English. The reports, as submitted to the Department of Education, are given. There have been several changes in the school regulations. The one aim has been to hold the boys when once we had hold of them and to give them as much good mentally, morally and spiritually as we could. Just how far we have succeeded in the last two points, mental and spiritual, we have no statistics to show. However, the results are not wanting. While there has been no revival, there has been a continued indication of thoughtfulness and devotion on the part of some of our best men. A number have been baptized. The Sunday morning service has been well attended, as have also the Sunday evening and Wednesday evening services. The Sunday evening service is led by one of our Korean Christians and the Wednesday evening service by one of our foreign teachers. Thus our scholars, including the Sabbath school, held each Sunday p. m., are given four regular services a week and a goodly number attend all. These services, and chapel exercises at nine o'clock each week-day morning, make up the regular religious exercises of our school.

This brief outline does not take into consideration the constant personal influence of the Christian teacher upon the student, nor the wholesome uplift given to a crude boy by breathing the atmosphere of a Christian institution. Nor in this connection should mention of the nature of our text books be omitted. Our books are edited on strictly religious principles. They contain many prayers, and many helpful hints as to God, His goodness, His love; as to Christ and his power to save all who call upon Him. There are many thoughts along these and similar lines which tend to turn the minds of the students into proper channels. One of our boys closed a letter to the writer with a quotation from St. Paul's writings. Not a bad beginning for a Pai Chai boy. Certainly a good ending.

* The following article with a few alterations was presented to the Annual Meeting, August 21, 1896.

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WILLIAM M. BAIRD.

ODES ON LIFE.

(Translations from Korean.)

Ye white gull of the sea,
So free!
What earthly care or rue,
Is there for a bird like you,
Swimming on the sea?
Tell of those happy islands, where
Poor mortals may resign their care,
And follow after thee!

That mountain green, these waters blue,
They were not made, they simply grew,
And 'tween the hills and waters here,
I too have grown as I appear,
Youth grows until the years unfold,
Then age comes on by growing old,

More than half of life is over!
Young again? no never! never!
Cease then from this growing gray
And as you are so please to stay!
These white hairs must surely know,
How to turn more slowly so.

Have we two lives or three.
Four or five bodies we?
This borrowed life in dreams,
Takes on a form it seems,
Knows only sorrow at the best,
Ne'er finding rest.

Jas. S. Gale.

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POLYGAMY AND THE CHURCH.

THESE are now two problems confronting the Church in Korea which are of paramount importance, and call for some settlement in the near future, if the Korean Church is to be planted upon what may be called an evangelical basis. These problems are (1) POLYGAMY, (2) ANCESTRAL WORSHIP.

The first of these especially will be considered, with a view of reaching some definite conclusion, at the annual meeting of the "Presbyterian Council" next October. At that meeting it is to be hoped, this subject will receive a very full discussion; and that the Church may take a stand which she can show to be scriptural, and that she may utter her voice with no uncertain sound concerning this special phase of heathen iniquity. I believe this subject ought to be carefully and prayerfully considered by every member of the "Council" long before the Autumn meeting, if we are to hope for a thorough discussion of it at that time. It is therefore not from any sense of my own ability to discuss this subject, that I undertake to lay before the Korean Missions what I believe to be a simple statement of the problem before us; but that by so doing, I may provoke, discussion from the pen of those whose learning and experience have enabled them to thoroughly handle the subject.

Seeing that this problem has long been perplexing the missionaries of India, China and Africa,—equally venerable and faithful old veterans taking directly opposite positions upon the subject,—it, although devoutly to be hoped, is scarcely to be expected that there will be unanimity among the missionaries in Korea, even at this early stage. I observe also that for almost any position which may be taken upon this subject, there can be found both arguments to substantiate and experienced missionaries to advocate it. A few of the different views and conclusions reached by different missionary societies and committees ought to be in order at this point.

First:— Some hold that polygamy was tolerated in the early Church in the same manner in which slavery was tolerated, that it was acknowledged to be inconsistent with the Christian

life, and that therefore while it was not propagated in the Church it was nevertheless allowed to enter with those having taken to themselves plural wives prior to their conversion. These advocates hold that any man having two or more wives or concubines should be received just as any other man, upon satisfactory evidence of his repentance and faith in Christ, but that such an one of course should never be elected to any office in the Church.

Second:— Others hold directly the opposite, namely, that such was not the practice of the early Church, and assert that there never were any polygamists at all in the early Christian Church. They quote 1st Tim. iii 2, 12, and Tit. i, 6, as not saying so, and try to prove it by 1st Tim. V, 9. They hold that to baptize a man living in this relation would bring havoc upon the church and corrupt her by opening floodgates of evil. These advocates hold "that a polygamist cannot be baptized but must remain in the state of a catechumen." He must remain without, and can never partake of the blessed Sacraments of our Lord's table. According to this view the sinners told that "He that is not with me is against me," and yet the missionary will not receive him. When he asks, "What shall I do to be saved?" he is told to "Repent and be baptized," but at the same time the instructor refuses to administer the ordinance. The missionary will perhaps tell the polygamist that "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" and then turns round and remarks "you cannot be baptized, because you are keeping up a sinful relation; not can we claim or advise you to break this relation, and if you did it yourself, we would not receive you." And it is further alleged by these advocates that many stand waiting without the door satisfied with the hope of receiving baptism on their death bed, when they will no longer be exposed to the danger of breaking the covenant of baptism.

Third:— Others hold that a heathen marriage, in which a man has taken more than one wife, cannot be held as constituting marriage at all. And that in such cases the man ought to be compelled to give up, not only all but one, but even every one of his wives; and then turn round and marry any one of them or none of his former wives, just as he chooses, even to marry some new one if he so prefers.

Fourth:— Still others hold that all but the first wife must be given up, but that he must retain her until "death do separate the twain."

Fifth:— And still others hold that while he must be made to give up all but one, that one need not necessarily be his first, but rather the one he loves most. Some would also go so far as to assert that although it be wrong to baptize a polygamist, living in this relation, still upon sufficient evidence of repentance and faith in Christ, all the wives, living at the same time with this polygamist in this sinful relation ought to be baptized and received into full membership of the church, but *he never*. I have not mentioned all the views taken upon this subject, but enough to show the great diversity of opinions concerning this matter.

Now in looking into the various discussions of this subject, I am surprised to find on the one hand this strange diversity of opinion, and on the other such a marked absence of scriptural reference. I also confess that I am utterly shocked at many of the views above stated. I verily believe that if we are to reason this out upon the basis of what we consider to be proper and right, without resting solely upon the plain teaching of scripture, we may expect nothing else than a diversity of opinion. When once we leave the word of God to seek ground for the justification of an action in church polity, who can prophesy where we will land? I believe there are innumerable perplexities connected with this problem, but I also believe that they lessen in number and difficulty as we keep close to the Word of God.

Now if I may humbly venture a few remarks expressive of my own opinion in this matter I would say.

(1) That I believe it to be in accordance with the will and purpose of God, that man should have but one wife, and woman but one husband. This is clearly taught in Scripture; in creation; at the flood, when Noah and his sons had each but one wife; and also in the New Testament Matt XIX. 5, 6; Mark X 7, 8, Eph. V 31, 33

(2) That no man having plural wives should hold any office in the Church. This I believe to be the plain teaching of 1st Tim. iii, 2, 12., Tit. i, 6.

(3) I also believe that we have a clear record of God's own dealing with his chosen people, on this important subject which cannot be left out of account. In consulting this record I fail to find a single instance in which God has excommunicated a man because of his living with two or more wives or con-

cubines. Furthermore, among those who did thus take to themselves two or more wives as well as concubines, we find such fathers in Israel as Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Gideon, Elkanah, Saul, David, Solomon &c. &c. Surely here is a testimony with God's signature which we dare neither deny nor gainsay. Not indeed, that God endorses polygamy, but that he has endorsed the toleration of polygamy, and that too in a most remarkable way. Observe the line through which our promised Saviour came. Matt. 1, 6. You can trace that line right back to David's son, born of one of David's wives, but not his only wife, neither his first wife; for he had wives many and concubines roany at that very time, and did God, indeed, disapprove of this? He himself says through his prophet Nathan addressing David, "I gave thee thy master's wives into thy bosom." 2nd Sam. XII, 8. Do we not also see something of the finger of God in the sowing of the first child—conceived in adultery, born to David of the wife of Urias? The second one conceived and born to him of Bathsheba when she was his legal wife—though he already had roany—became the glorious Solomon through whom the promised Messiah should come. And how roany wives did this glorious Solomon not have? Now if God teaches anything, (and I believe it teaches roach,) it certainly shows us how very leniently God has been pleased to deal with this sin in the Church of old. Shut out David because of his multitude of wives and concubines, and what becomes of his multitude of wives and concubines, and what becomes of the promised seed? Will any one say that this did not within the Church of God? Was it not the Church of God that was in the wilderness? Certainly this was the Church, and when God ruled and polygamy was tolerated.

(4) I find in this record no instance where God at any time condemns polygamy as a sin that should shut a man out from the Church, or the kingdom of God. In such passages as Gen. V, 19, 21, and others where it is distinctly stated that "they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God," polygamy is not once mentioned among these sins as a sin which the person committing it shall be excluded from the kingdom, and shall we attempt to bar them out and exclude them from the privileges of the sacred ordinances? I should like to be pointed to the Scripture for it, if there be any. If there be none where does the Church get her authority for such a course?

(5) 1st Tim III teaches plainly enough, as I take it,

such persons shall not hold office in the church. But it certainly also hints, at least, with the very strongest kind of presumption that there were those in the Church at that time, who had more than one wife, else of what significance the injunction that such should not hold office in the Church? If it be insisted that these passages be interpreted by 1st Tim V, 6, then, it seems to me the Church of the present must be very far out of the way, seeing that it is by no means true of the Church of today that an office in the Church is ever withheld because the man has married a second wife after the decease of his first one. Taking the former meaning that it refers to plural wives, I think Paul is speaking solely with reference to church officers, so that the injunction can never be made to apply as a condition of membership, but only of office bearing. I would not be misunderstood as advocating the right or propriety of plural marriages. Far from that, I believe we can not stand too firm against that pernicious evil. I believe God's word is very clear as to what our duty is with reference to this matter. But marriage being of the nature of permanency, once done it is done for ever. Once entered into it can never be severed while either of the parties live, save for the one sin of which the Bible speaks as being a just ground for divorce. Now for this very reason, which is found in the nature of marriage itself, I believe that God intentionally withheld the relegating of any such power to the church. Perhaps the punishment of having plural wives is sufficient *per se*, I do not know how that is, but the Bible has given us some ground for thinking so at least.

It seems to me therefore that there can be no question with regard to the reception into the church, of a man who has already plural wives before his conversion. If a polygamist has given satisfactory evidence of repentance and faith in Christ we never dare assume the authority to keep him out of the church, and thus debar him from the benefits of the sacraments of the Church, nor dare we assume the power to sever the union which has from all time been considered to be of sufficient validity as to have been tolerated by God himself all through the Old Testament dispensation. No man can compel a polygamist to abandon his wives or concubines without causing him to commit a sin for which he can never atone. I do not believe we can tolerate polygamy in the church. But at the same time we cannot bar out one who, having effected this relation in

his sinful darkness and cannot now release himself there. We must admit him and grant to him the sacraments of the Church. Within the Church of course it can never be done. If it occurs, there is but one thing to be done,—to get it out. Once a Christian and enlightened upon this point every Christian must become, he will never want to go back to that wretched way. I do not believe that the Christian Church was or ever will be troubled with polygamy. Within her polygamy is a plant of the darkness, and never will she be brought to the sunlight of Christ's righteousness.

W. L. Swallen.

REV. WM. J. MCKENZIE

A MEMOIR

THE Rev. WM. J. McKenzie was born and educated in Nova Scotia, and became an ordained Minister of the Presbyterian Church of that Province. During his seminary course he served as missionary to the settlers in Labrador, braving the rough seas and terrible cold of Arctic winter in order to bring the Gospel to perishing souls. Called of God to a missionary career he decided to give his life to the work in Korea. Having no conscientious doubts as to the propriety of the general principles on which the great missionary Boards of the Church are organized, he further decided to cast himself entirely on the Providence of God for maintenance on the field. As soon as his purposes and plans were known, money sufficient for all his needs was provided and he started on his journey to his chosen field.

Mr. McKenzie reached Chemulpo, Korea, Dec. 15th. 1893 and then went on to Soul. His genial countenance, jolly laugh, and great good humor and hearty good will soon endeared him to all. His conscientiousness, courage and shrewd common sense early won for him the respect of his colleagues, who were not slow to recognize in him a missionary of the brightest promise. He entered with zeal upon the drudge work which confronts all new missionaries,—the study of the Korean language, and of the customs, views and condition of the people in whose service he proposed to spend his life. A short time in Soul, a little longer in Chemulpo and he removed to Sorai where he met his death. In Sorai he settled himself temporarily in the home of a Korean Christian. His food was such as the surrounding farms produced and he adopted the Korean dress. He made excellent progress in the study of the language; and his presence, counsel and ministrations strengthened and confirmed the little body of Christians there, and resulted in a large increase in their number.

He visited the surrounding villages for miles and in a little time his name was known all over that section. All through the Tong Hak excitement he remained at the post, laboring with those of the insurrectionists he could meet,